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## Two Sorceries

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Two Sorceries

I.

The blade was sharp and the fever was high.  
Somewhere a quarrel sprang into air.  
Surgeons, their backs turned, circling the body.  
Blood in the throat. The neck skinned back.

Somewhere a quarrel sprang into air.  
The needle was hot and the thread was long.  
Blood in the throat. The neck skinned back.  
Snick snack sang the blade that clipped each stitch.

The needle was hot and the groove was scratched,  
frayed thread of a sound unwound in an ear.  
Snick snack sang the blade that cut her loose.  
Her fingers closed on a foreign hand.

A threat unwound in an open ear.  
The throat was slit and the neck was wrung.  
Her fingers closed, a foreign hand.  
The vein was dry and the mouth was parched.

The throat was slit and the neck was wrung;  
The tongue was bitter, the tongue was sharp;  
The vein was dry and the mouth was parched.  
Remember nothing. Remember it all.

The tongue was bitter, the tongue was sharp.  
The sun rose white in an altered sky.  
Remember nothing. Remember it all.  
The fall of petals in a silent room.

The sun rose white and bloomed in air.  
The blood was bright and the fever high.  
The fall of petals in a silent room.  
Surgeons, their backs turned, circling the body.

## II.

First thing out of hospital she sat down  
with the catalogs she'd hoarded since the spring  
and everything she wanted she clipped out.

Meticulous, she scissored every prize  
free of its dross--each push-up bra, limpid  
as a skin of oil on water, she sliced

clear of its flesh, its raised and yearning arms,  
the parings spiralling from her steely  
hand, crumpling themselves in origami

eccentricities, a hodge-podge settling  
to a flimsy patchwork, a gift-wrapped bed.  
Under the pillow, she banked plenitude:

paper furnishings for paper houses,  
paper clothes for paper dolls--red velvet  
blotting paper: a Russian-collared blouse;

transparent mauve rice-paper: wine goblets,  
their swirl of pin-prick bubbles a paper  
promise of champagne. Wreathed pomegranates,

artichokes. A desk with secret drawers where  
letters could be safely lost. The lilac  
iridescence of glistered Roman glass--

earrings of peeled skin, choker of silver  
bruises.

Later, she would strike match after  
match, and spirit each treasure into air,

stocking the icy empty smoky shelves of  
that vast emporium where pestilence  
might shop to its heart's content, might buy up  
all her burning desires, and leave her be.